

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
EB-07 TRSE-00 ACDA-10 /081 W  
-----070537Z 045208 /12

R 061050Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2983  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
USINT BAGHDAD  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
DIA WASHDC  
SECDEF WASHDC  
USIA WASHDC  
USCINCEUR

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 2890

LONDON FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PFOR PINT SY  
SUBJ: SYRIAN MEDIA SUMMARY FOR MAY 5, 1977: ATTENTION FOCUSED  
ON CARTER-ASAD MEETING

1. MEDIA CONTAINED CONCENTRATED ON FORTHCOMING CARTER-ASAD  
MEETING, CREATING EXPECTATIONS THAT THIS MEETING WILL  
SURPASS IN IMPORTANCE THOSE OF OTHER ARAB LEADERS WITH  
CARTER. ALMOST ALL EDITORIALS DEALT WITH CARTER-ASAD  
TALKS AND APPEARED DIRECTED TOWARD U.S. AS MUCH AS SYRIAN  
CONSUMPTION.  
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2. ARTICLES ANNOUNCED ASAD WOULD PAY COURTESY CALL ON  
SWISS PRESIDENT IN GENEVA AND HAS ACCEPTED INVITATION  
FOR LUNCHEON IN HIS HONOR IN BERN FOLLOWING  
CONCLUSION OF HIS TALKS WITH CARTER. BULK OF ARTICLES  
ON SUBJECT, HOWEVER, FOCUSED ON REUTERS REPORT OF  
PORTION SECRETARY'S PRESS CONFERENCE PRIOR TO HIS

DEPARTURE TO LONDON IN WHICH HE DISCUSSED PLANS TO VISIT THE REGION, U.S. INTENTIONS TO OFFER PROPOSALS ON ALL THE CORE ISSUES, AND HIS REAFFIRMATION THAT FINAL DECISIONS ON SETTLEMENT SHOULD BE TAKEN BY CONCERNED PARTIES.

3. EDITORIALS ALL STRESSED SYRIA IS THE ARAB STATE HOLDING KEY TO QUESTIONS OF WAR AND PEACE. AMID AL-KHULI WRITING IN AL-BAATH REMINDED READERS THAT SYRIA HAD NOTHING TO LOSE BY ENGAGING IN DIALOGUE WITH ANY INTERNATIONAL POWER CAPABLE OF EXERTING INFLUENCE ON ME PROBLEM AND CLAIMED DEFENSIVELY THAT SYRIA COULD ALWAYS BREAK OFF SUCH DIALOGUE SINCE OTHERS WHOSE INTERESTS AT STAKE AND WHO DESIRE PEACE WOULD BE THE LOSERS (PRESUMABLY U.S.). HOWEVER, EDITORIALS WERE OVERALL MODERATE IN TONE AND STRESSED THAT SYRIA WAS ENTERING THESE TALKS WITH, AS ONE COLUMNIST PUT IT, "AN OPEN HEART" LIBERATED FROM COMPLEXES, READY TO DISCUSS AND EXCHANGE VIEWS, TO TALK AND LISTEN, AND UNAFRAID TO DISCUSS THE ISSUES WHETHER BEHIND CLOSED DOORS OR IN OPEN DEBATE." EDITORIAL IN TISHRIIN ALLUDED TO PERCEIVED DOMESTIC PRESSURES ON U.S. ADMINISTRATION RELATING TO PEACE PROCESS, AND STATED THAT ARABS NOT ASKING U.S. TO CONTRAVENE INTERESTS OF PARTICULAR SOCIAL GROUPS OR U.S. SOCIAL SYSTEM BUT WISHED FOR IT TO TAKE FAVORABLE POSITION TOWARDS PRINCIPLES CONTAINED IN UN CHARTER AND RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS.

4. MOST IMPORTANT POINTS CONTAINED IN THESE EDITORIALS, WERE ASSERTIONS THAT ASAD REPRESENTED AN "INTEGRATED ARAB UNCLASSIFIED

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VIEWPOINT" AND WOULD ADHERE TO BASIC PRINCIPLES IN THE SAME MANNER AS SYRIA HAD IN THE SOVIET UNION. EDITORIALS GENERALLY SUGGESTED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER SHOULD SET FORTH MORE SPECIFIC U.S. CONCEPTIONS ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF SETTLEMENT THAN HE HAS TO DATE.

5. LEBANON. SOURCES "CLOSE TO THE QUADRUPARTITE COMMITTEE" SAID THERE REAL HOPE OF ACHIEVING UNDERSTANDING "BETWEEN THE LEBANESE AUTHORITIES AND PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE. OBSERVERS ATTRIBUTED THIS "TO SUCCESSFUL MEETING RECENTLY HELD BETWEEN SARKIS AND ARAFAT. INFORMED SOURCES TO BEIRUT INDICATED THAT AGREEMENT OVER IMPLEMENTATION CAIRO AGREEMENT IS APPROACHING." THIS SETTLEMENT SAID BASED ON COLLECTION OF WEAPONS INSIDE THE PALESTINIAN CAMPS AND THEIR PLACEMENT UNDER JOINT LEBANESE-PALESTINIAN GUARD. SAME SOURCES INDICATED QUADRUPARTITE COMMITTEE WORKING TO ACHIEVE INTERPRETATION SATISFACTORY TO BOTH LEBANESE AUTHORITIES AND PLO IN ORDER HASTEN IMPLEMENTATION OF CAIRO AGREEMENT. ARTICLES NOTED AGAIN THAT "SARKIS HAD SET JUNE AS DEADLINE FOR SETTLEMENT OF

ALL OUTSTANDING SECURITY AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS."

6. CHANCELLOR BRUNO KREISKY, WHO CURRENTLY VISITING DAMASCUS, MET WITH PM KHULAYFAWI EVENING MAY 4 PRIOR TO BEGINNING OF OFFICIAL TALKS BETWEEN TWO SIDES. KREISKY ALSO REPORTEDLY MET WITH ARAFAT WHO ACCOMPANIED BY QADDUMI, ABU MAYZAR, AND GHAZI HUSSEIN WHO HEADS PLO OFFICE IN VIENNA.

7. ARAB DONOR STATES. EDITORIAL IN AL-BAATH AGAIN DIRECTED THINLY VEILED CRITICISM AT ARAB OIL PRODUCERS FOR INVESTING THEIR MONEY ABROAD RATHER THAN IN ARAB WORLD. EDITORIAL CALLED FOR ESTABLISHMENT UNIFIED ARAB FINANCIAL MARKET TO EXPLOIT ARAB ECONOMIC POTENTIAL. COMMENT: THIS CURRENT CAMPAIGN IS MUCH LOWER-KEY THAN THAT WHICH OCCURRED IN LATE FEBRUARY BUT INDICATES SYRIA STILL DISSATISFIED WITH AMOUNT OF FUNDS IT RECEIVING FROM ARAB OIL STATES.

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